

Yankee Tea Drinkers, Untutored in Choosing And Brewing, Are Fooled by Poor Concoctions

Unlike English and Canadians, Americans Erroneously Think "Pekoe," a Mere Trade Name, Is Always Label of Choicest Grade. Good Tea Often Is Spoiled By Improper Brewing.

"—and bring me a cup o' tea." The average American thinks as little of his general, all-round, pound-per-year tea drinking, as that! Like the wayside motorist who pulls up at the next garage and orders "a quart of oil," without regard for the type or particular lubrication thirst of his motor, the good old A. A. falls likewise to do his tea drinking by specification. He fails for what is given him—and gets that very thing.

An American will boast of the great care under which American products are manufactured. He will tell you of the research laboratories constantly on guard to improve American products—and then he will turn around and forget to specify the quality of the things he himself purchases.

He gets stung and it is his own fault.

Fooled By Name "Pekoe."

In his tea buying hotel-men and restaurateurs frankly admit they sting him. They say "What's the difference?" If they serve abominable concoctions, call it tea, and the ignorant drink it for tea and do not complain, why grow sick with worry?

The Englishman, Canadian or Australian knows, and will invariably sniff at astonishment and horror, at the usual abomination served to him as tea in this country. They have acquired the knowledge through long years of tea drinking, and poor quality tea, or improperly brewed good tea is immediately recognized.

The average tea drinker in this country does not know that the so-called, and much extolled, Orange Pekoe is nothing more than the name of a leaf, and that it may be good, bad or indifferent tea, depending wholly on the elevation at which it is grown. Nor is it common knowledge that the quality of the finished beverage is dependent upon the skill with which the leaves are blended. Regardless of prevalent indifference to tea quality, the government insists upon American purchases being supplied with the best average grade of teas in the world.

The government tea testing board, headed by H. G. Woodworth, a Boston man, is constantly on the job watching against the tea consumers being misled by the name of imported teas in any way adulterated or artificially colored—as is often done in the case of green teas.

Boston a Tea Center.

In England it is the inevitable thing for the tester or blender to taste the product, but in this country it is a difference of opinion among experts on this matter. Some claim to have so educated their sense of smell as to equal the taste, and allege they have no trouble whatever in determining the flavor and strength by means of the smell alone. There are experts here who maintain that the smell in no wise equals the taste, and they cannot comprehend how a man could get as good results from smelling as from tasting.

As Boston is the second port in importance in this country and imports about 14,000,000 pounds a year, it will be seen that it plays a very important part in the tea consumption of this continent. The largest importation, of course, goes to New York, and the third in importance goes to San Francisco.

At the great building on Berkeley street, where the output of the Salada tea in the United States finds its source and center, you may see at all hours of the day the expert tea testers at their task in one section or corner of the office. Max Tito, the chief of the tea company, has had no less than twenty-five years' experience, and just as the violinist can detect the slightest gradation or flattening of his instrument, so he is able to detect the faintest shade or difference in tea. He can tell where the tea comes from by its flavor and aroma and can give its pedigree, telling at what season of the year it was grown and at what altitude. Indeed he has been known to name the very garden from which it came.

Nose and Palate.

He will tell you that the success of his business depends almost entirely upon his nose and his palate. There was a time, many years ago, when it was the custom for the public to test its own tea before buying it. Storekeepers had the chests of tea spread out and blended to suit the palate of the purchaser.

Richard Twining, a tea merchant, back in 1788, did this very same thing, and tells about it, saying among other things that "one pound of tea might be mixed from some twenty chests."

The way tea is tested at the Salada warehouse is a simple process. First the leaves are infused in a small covered cup-size China pot and are allowed to steep for exactly five minutes, timed by a five-minute sand glass. Then the brew is stirred, the liquor is drained off into a cup and the steeped leaves placed in the cover of the pot. In this way the color and aroma of the leaves are examined separately. The tea is tested on a stationary counter, whereas in many



The tiny leaf and bud at the top of stem are known commercially as "Broken Orange Pekoe." The leaf on right of stem is "Orange Pekoe." To left is a "Pekoe" leaf; to the right is "Souchong." This is the amount plucked and sorted into above-named grades.

houses in this country the test is done on a revolving table.

Great Care Exercised.

The expert weighs out on scales of the most delicate make—as delicate in fact as those used in compounding prescriptions—a pinch of tea that will weigh four-thirty-seconds of an ounce, or just as much as a Canadian half dime. He then pours filtered boiling, bubbling water upon the tea being sure that the water is mad, galloping boiling. The reason for his insistence upon the bubbling, boiling water is the effect of steeping, which is apparent in the appearance of the leaf. The least variation in color means uneven fermentation. The perfect color of the infused leaf should range from a rich, chocolate brown to a bright, reddish shade.

The color of the liquor in the cup is important. It should appear to the eye—not too pale, cloudy, nor colorless.

After the leaf is examined in the liquor it is taken up in a spoon and tasted to see if it is up to the standard. The taste will reveal the body, the flavor, and the sharpness or "point" of the tea.

The taste of the tester becomes somewhat blunted from long exercise. He is quick to find the effects of a cold in his business. It absolutely destroys his sense of taste. Smoking, too, is bad if indulged in at the same time. But he finds that smoke from a cigar or cigarette or even a pipe doesn't affect his ability to taste, if indulged in when not testing tea. Any disposition registers on the keenness of taste and smell.

Altitude Means Quality.

"Orange Pekoe" is looked upon in this country as a kind of tea, when it is merely a trade name, descriptive of the type of leaf. It might well be one of several kinds of tea, meaning by that a good, bad or indifferent tea. The elevation at which the tea plant is grown decides its merit or quality. Orange Pekoe is not necessarily the best tea, though if it grows at a high elevation it is of the best.

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P. C. LARKIN,
President Salada Tea Co.

tion it is the best; whereas if, on the contrary, the tea plant is grown at a low elevation, Orange Pekoe then becomes an inferior quality of tea.

Tea experts wonder why is it that some of the people here, particularly in the service of hotels, brew the tea in metal. The right way, and only correct way, they say, is to first put a kettle of pure, fresh water over the fire, place in a cup which has first been scalded a level teaspoonful of tea and fill the cup with bubbling, boiling water. Let it stand not less than three minutes; nor more than five minutes for the perfect cup of tea.

Tea Popular With All.

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Upper left—Image of King Fu Tsze, or Confucius, contained in the elaborate collection of Oriental art treasures gathered by Mr. Larkin and on display at "Salada Tea" headquarters in Boston.

Upper right—Another antique house in "Salada" Temple.

Below—Experts testing "Salada" tea.

ages, as its good qualities are becoming more widely known. Last July when Donald B. McMillan started on his voyage from Boston to make his dash to the North Pole, he carried with him a large invoice of Salada tea, and when Perry made his last dash into the Arctic regions he discarded all food, all camp outfit and took only tea as a stimulant. He recognized, as well as McMillan, that where there is snow and ice, with a small fire, tea is a great energizer.

Experts the world over declare the product to be the most healthful and wholesome of any stimulant, and H. G. Woodworth, of Boston, chairman of the United States board of tea experts, says of it: "Tea is a veritable healthy stimulant. Of course, tea if taken to extreme may be considered harmful, too."

It is perhaps only natural that Boston, where the great All-American tea party was put on the

boards—and overboard—should be the country's tea center. With years of trading the Hub city has come to consider the business as one of its foster children. It is more than a commercial enterprise with the people of Boston—more, indeed, like a family tradition. Relics which in any way describe for posterity the history of the business are carefully preserved by the leaders of the blending art.

Mr. P. C. Larkin, president of the Salada Tea Company, whose travels through the Orient have created not a little interest, has a predilection which he indulges for art. Indeed he has made of it and of Oriental art in particular, a life study and has become an art expert and connoisseur as well as a collector of art treasures from China, Japan and India, almost without a peer. The offices of his distributing plant, an eight story building of Indiana limestone, are a veritable

treasure-house or museum of art. Within its spacious walls are shown statuary, tapestry, furniture and furnishings of priceless value, some of these representative of the rarest bits of Chinese antiquities imaginable.

Included in Collection.

Included in this collection are a life size marble statue of Kuan Yin, or the Goddess of Mercy, which is said to be a rare example of Chinese Buddhist sculpture, a Buddha of the Wei Period, fifth century A. D., from the Temple of Po-Chy in Northern China, a seated Buddha pronounced by experts to have come from some Temple at Lo-Yang, Honan Province, which was an old capital of the Sung Dynasty, two Cloisonne Fous Dogs, and rare and antique specimens innumerable, together with rugs of unique oriental designs.

It is, in fact, a veritable gallery of art, collected by the skillful hand of an expert, from far Eastern lands. A blending of the atmosphere of the Orient with all its mysticism and ancient rites and occultism with the plain everyday commercial life of the Occident.

If you visit Boston and miss seeing the Salada Tea Company's "Temple of Art," you will have missed one of the greatest art treasure houses in the country. The head of the corporation believes in sharing with the public his collection, and extends a cordial welcome to all.

One Man Glad He Did Not Use Wrist Watch

LAWRENCE, Mass., April 1.—Roland J. Ferguson is probably congratulating himself that he did not become addicted to a wrist watch. Ferguson was held up and robbed by three youthful bandits who fired several shots at him. One of the bullets rendered his watch, which he carried in a vest pocket, a total loss.

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EX-HUSBAND SUED FOR BREAKING WORD

London Judge Awards Woman Big Sum as Result of Daughter's Testimony.

LONDON, April 1.—Perhaps the strangest breach of promise case ever heard in London came before the Chief Justice when a divorced woman, Mrs. A. Bendix, sued her former husband, alleging he had renewed his courtship after the divorce and had proposed that they marry again.

Then, she said, a few days before their second wedding day he married a well known actress. The jury awarded her £5,000 damages.

Bendix denied he had actually proposed remarriage, but admitted he had considered it. Asked why he had weakened with Mrs. Bendix, replied, "because I was trying to get myself to agree to remarry her."

In her testimony, Mrs. Bendix admitted that after the divorce, in 1919, she begged her husband to return to her and that he had been generous, giving her an allowance since her divorce of £1,000 free of tax.

Then, Mrs. Bendix alleged, her husband called her up in 1920, while she was staying with her fifteen-year-old daughter at Eastbourne, and invited her to London. She went and he treated her affectionately, she said.

On her birthday, she said, Mr. Bendix had surprised her by proposing remarriage over the telephone, but later he had failed to keep an appointment. Doreen, his daughter, telephoned him, and he replied that he had written to his wife's mother, saying he was finished with his wife.

On the stand Doreen stated she had told her father "what I thought of him," which, in reply to counsel, she said was: "You're a cad and a blackguard."

The husband denied he had proposed the second time to his wife, though he admitted he had spoken of remarriage before the daughter.

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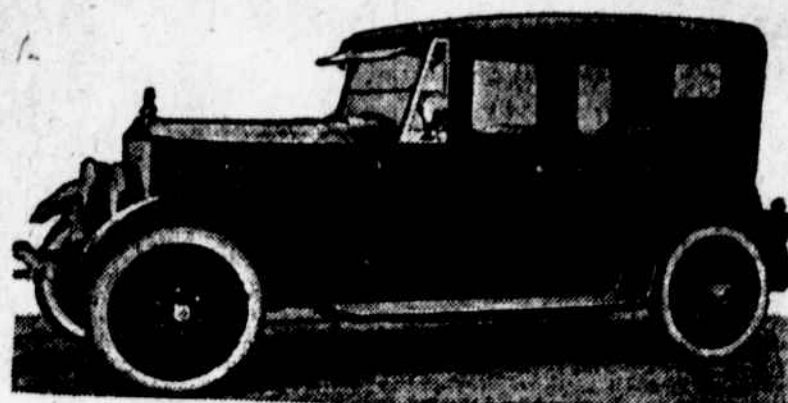
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